

LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

2003 – 2004 (FY-04)

The Lakes Region has changed tremendously in the past 20 years. Homes and businesses have expanded along major roadways, and many of our communities have experienced dramatic changes. This growth has resulted in a number of regional challenges. The Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC) is the area organization established to address the effects of growth at both the local and regional level. With a service area covering over 1,200 square miles in Belknap, Carroll, Grafton and Merrimack Counties, the LRPC provides a wide range of planning services to member municipalities. The Commission offers direct and support services ranging from technical assistance, geographic information systems, and transportation planning, to land use and environmental planning, and economic development. The LRPC is primarily funded by local, state, and federal resources. We are contacted several times daily for answers to local and statewide issues. We also maintain a regular dialogue with state agencies as a resource for the entire Lakes Region. Our goal remains to provide support and leadership to the governments, businesses and citizens of the Lakes Region.

Here are some of our services performed on behalf of Alton and the region in the past fiscal year:

- ❖ Continue to attend regular board of director meetings of the Lakes Region Household Hazardous Product facility, and assist as appropriate.
- ❖ Conducted Community Assistance Visits to Alton as part of a comprehensive assessment of the town's local floodplain management program, and assisted the town with implementing effective flood loss reduction measures.
- ❖ Provided information and examples of open space development to members of the planning board.
- ❖ Assisted a member of the conservation commission with making changes to the GRANIT conservation lands database.
- ❖ Provided information on groundwater extraction to local officials.
- ❖ Reviewed project proposals through the NH Intergovernmental Review Agreement that provides the region and local communities an opportunity to respond to applications seeking state and federal aid. LRPC reviewed many proposals having a combined investment total greater than \$15 million in the Lakes Region.
- ❖ Planned the 19th annual household hazardous waste collection in the Lakes Region. Two consecutive Saturdays were designated as collection days for 24 participating communities. An estimated 20,000 total gallons of waste were collected, containerized, and transported to EPA approved end-of-life locations around the country.
- ❖ Co-hosted and organized three public Municipal Law Lectures where practicing attorneys provide a legal perspective on local planning, zoning and other municipal issues. Recent lectures included: the Basics of Subdivision & Site Plan Review, Land Use Law Update, and New Challenges for Municipal Regulation of the Environment. We also prepared for the 2004 Law Lectures, in partnership with the NH Municipal Association.

- ❖ Completed the Lakes Region Housing Needs Assessment, an assessment of the regional need for housing for persons and families of all levels of income. It is viewable at www.lakesrpc.org, our web site.
- ❖ Ordered and distributed copies of the NH Planning and Land Use Regulation books at considerable savings.
- ❖ Convened several meetings of the LRPC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to enhance local involvement in transportation planning and project development. The TAC advises the LRPC on projects of regional significance.
- ❖ Continued work on the Lakes Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This planning effort will help provide a blueprint for the location of local bike and pedestrian routes.
- ❖ Conducted over 160 traffic counts around the region, in cooperation with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation.
- ❖ Maintain an ongoing effort to update a database of key socioeconomic and human service indicators, in cooperation with the NH Community Development Finance Authority.
- ❖ Convened six area Commission meetings, two of which featured Legislative Nights where local legislators presented information on proposed legislation of regional planning, environmental, and economic interest.
- ❖ Updated the annual Development Activity in the Lakes Region, a survey of subdivision, housing, construction, industrial, and commercial development trends in the region.
- ❖ Continue to represent the region on several boards and committees related to the economic and environmental well-being of the region, e.g., the Belknap County Economic Development Council, NH Route 16 Corridor Advisory Committee, the Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee, etc.
- ❖ Secured funding from the NH Emergency Management Bureau to assist local communities with the preparation of all hazard management plans.
- ❖ Produced a calendar of critical deadlines for March Town Meeting, and distributed it via our web site and regular mail.
- ❖ Advocated several transportation enhancement applications on behalf of the region; five were selected by the Governor's Advisory Council on Intermodal Transportation having a combined total of approximately \$1.3 million.